

AUGUST 24, 1976

SKYJACKING AND THE U.N.

ANNCR: NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN SEES EGYPT'S RESCUE OF SOME ONE HUNDRED PASSENGERS AND CREWMEN OF AN AIRLINER TAKEN OVER BY HIJACKERS AS POINTING UP THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON THE PROBLEM.

VOICE: THE INCIDENT ENDED HAPPILY--NO PASSENGERS OR CREWMEN WERE INJURED OR KILLED, AND THE THREE HIJACKERS WERE CAPTURED IN A DRAMATIC FASHION BY EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS. BUT NOT SO HAPPILY, EGYPT AND LIBYA ARE EXCHANGING CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES IN CONNECTION WITH IT. EGYPT HAS ACCUSED LIBYA OF INCITING THE CAPTURED TERRORISTS AND PROMISING TO REWARD THEM FINANCIALLY. LIBYA DENIES THIS -- SAYS THAT EGYPT CONCOCTED THE WHOLE INCIDENT AS PART OF ITS ANTI-LIBYAN CAMPAIGN. SO ONCE MORE AN ACT OF TERRORISM HAS ESCALATED THE ALREADY-PRESENT TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBOR NATIONS.

ASIDE FROM THE HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OF TERRORISM--THE INJURIES, DEATHS AND FAMILY ANGUISH -- THE CRIME IS TAKING ON INCREASINGLY SINISTER IMPLICATIONS FOR WORLD PEACE. GOVERNMENTS VICTIMIZED BY TERRORISTS--AS IN THE CASE OF THE ENTEBBE INCIDENT SOME WEEKS AGO AND ISRAEL'S REACTION TO IT -- ARE INCREASINGLY IMPATIENT IN DEALING WITH IT EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF USING FORCE INVOLVING OTHER NATIONS. THE ENTEBBE INCIDENT WAS COSTLY IN TERMS OF LIVES LOST BY PASSENGERS, BY ISRAELI RESCUERS, UGANDAN SOLDIERS IMPLICATED IN GUARDING THE HIJACKED FRENCH PLANE, AND LAST -- BUT NOT LEAST -- THE TERRORISTS THEMSELVES, MOST OF WHOM WERE WIPED OUT BY THE ISRAELI COMMANDOS. THE AFTERMATH MARRED RELATIONS BETWEEN UGANDA AND KENYA, WHICH ONLY NOW SEEM TO BE ON THE MEND AGAIN.

IT IS THIS QUALITY OF RAISING TENSIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS THAT IS MOST DISQUIETING TO MANY UNITED NATIONS MEMBERS--AS THE DEBATE IN SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE ENTEBBE RESCUE REFLECTED. THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL ACTED INCONCLUSIVELY IN THAT INSTANCE WAS A DISAPPOINTMENT TO MANY NATIONS WHICH HAD HOPED FOR A STERN CRACKDOWN ON SKYJACKERS AND ANY GOVERNMENTS BACKING THEM TACITLY OR OVERTLY. BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD URGE NEXT MONTH'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO TAKE THE POSITIVE, FIRM STEPS AGAINST AIR TERRORISM THAT THE COUNCIL SKIRTED. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN DELEGATIONS SAID THEY WOULD BACK A STRONG WEST GERMAN INITIATIVE IN THE ASSEMBLY AGAINST AIR PIRACY. VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA, OFTEN VICTIMS OF AIR HIJACKINGS, HAD ALREADY INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD RAISE THE ISSUE AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION.

THE POINT OF ALL THIS IS THAT THERE IS A GROWING SENTIMENT AMONG UNITED NATIONS MEMBERS THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR IRON-CLAD MEASURES THAT WILL INSURE PUNISHMENT NOT ONLY FOR AIR PIRATES, BUT ALSO FOR THOSE WHO--WHETHER FOR SO-CALLED HUMANITARIAN REASONS AS LIBYA'S QADDAFI SAYS--OFFER THEM HAVENS AFTER THEY COMMIT THEIR CRIMES. THE PERCEPTION IS GROWING THAT ONLY THUS CAN AIR PIRACY BE EFFECTIVELY FOUGHT AND EVENTUALLY STAMPED OUT AS A DISRUPTER OF WORLD PEACE. THAT IS WHY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON AIR HIJACKINGS WILL BE WATCHED CLOSELY AROUND THE WORLD.